

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY SUVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6045
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
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DEPT PASS ALL ACP AND EC POSTS

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TAGS: PFOR, EAID, EEC, FJ
SUBJECT: EEC/ACP MEETING CONCLUDES IN SUVA

REF: (A) SUVA 0475
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BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. 1. THE SECOND MEETING OF THE EEC/ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HELD IN SUVA THE WEEK OF APRIL 11, 1977, ENDED ON A GENERALLY SUCCESSFUL NOTE APRIL 15 WITH MOST DELEGATIONS PLEASED WITH THE SOLUTIONS REACHED IN RESPONSE TO THE MAJOR AND MINOR PROBLEMS RAISED BY THE ACP SECRETARIAT AND OTHER SPOKESMEN (SEE REFTELS) EARLIER IN THE WEEK. THE EEC COUNTRIES FOUND IT POLITICALLY EXPEDIENT TO ACCOMMODATE ACP REQUESTS THAT THE EEC TAKE A MORE FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS OF THE LOME CONVENTION, AND ON THE WHOLE THE EEC DELEGATIONS WERE
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GENERALLY RESPONSIVE TO ACP NEEDS. THE FINAL PRESS COMMUNIQUE ALLUDED TO THE FRANK AND CONSTRUCTIVE DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE DURING THE WEEK AND THE SPIRIT OF GOODWILL THAT EXISTED ON BOTH SIDES. A SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS FOLLOWS.

2. STABILIZATION OF EXPORT EARNINGS. THE COUNCIL PRAISED

THE RAPID IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STABEX SCHEME IN 1975 AND 1976. NEW PRODUCTS WERE ADDED TO THE EXISTING THIRTEEN GROUPS OF PRODUCTS ALREADY COVERED BY THE STABEX SYSTEM. THESE ARE VANILA, CLOVES, PYRETHRUM, WOOD MOHAIR, GUM ARABIC, AND ILANG-ILANG. IN RECOGNITION OF THE SPECIAL GEOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC SITUATIONS OF CERTAIN COUNTRIES AND THE PARTICULAR STRUCTURE OF THEIR TRADE, THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 17 (4) OF THE CONVENTION WERE EXTENDED TO WESTERN SAMOA, TONGA, THE SEYCHELLES, THE COMORO STATE AND LESOTHO. THIS PROVIDES THAT EXPORTS FROM THESE COUNTRIES IRRESPECTIVE OF DESTINATION BE CONSIDERED ELIGIBLE FOR STABEX BENEFITS. CAPE VERDE WILL BE EXTENDED THE SAME BENEFITS WHEN IT FULLY ACCEDES TO THE CONVENTION. AGREEMENT WAS ALSO REACHED ON CLOSE CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE EEC AND ANY ACP STATE IF EXCEPTIONAL EVENTS GIVE RISE TO DIFFICULTIES IN APPLYING THE STABEX PROVISIONS, IN WHICH CASE THE STABEX PROVISIONS WILL BE INTERPRETED AS LIBERALLY AS POSSIBLE. IN RESPONSE TO ACP REQUESTS THAT MINERAL PRODUCTS AND RUBBER SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE STABEX LIST THE COUNCIL ADOPTED A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR CLOSE CONSULTATION WHEN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ARE HELD THAT ARE AIMED AT REACHING POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS IN THE SUPPLY AND MARKETING OF SUCH COMMODITIES.

3. SUGAR. THE COUNCIL DEALT WITH THREE DIFFERENT QUESTIONS ON SUGAR. THE FIRST QUESTION CONCERNED THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE EEC TO REDUCE EXPORT QUOTAS OF COUNTRIES THAT FAILED TO PROVIDE THEIR QUOTAS IN THE 1975/76 DELIVERY PERIOD. THE EEC BACKED DOWN AND AGREED TO REINSTATE ORIGINAL EXPORT ENTITLEMENT TO THOSE COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY THE REDUCTION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DECISION. THE EEC INDICATED IT WAS TAKING THIS ACTION AS AN AUTONOMOUS POLITICAL GESTURE WHICH WOULD NOT BE RETROACTIVE AND WHICH WOULD NOT CALL INTO QUESTION THE VALIDITY OF THE EEC'S ORIGINAL DECISION. IT TOOK THIS STEP LARGELY ON THE GROUNDS THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST YEAR OF APPLICATION OF THE SUGAR PROTOCOL AND IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE ACP STATES MIGHT HAVE HAD IN APPLYING THESE PROVISIONS. THE EEC ASKED THAT THIS CONCESSION SHOULD NOT CONSTITUTE A PRECEDENT.

THE SECOND POINT CONCERNING SUGAR DEALT WITH THE NEGOTIATION OF GUARANTEED PRICES FOR THE PERIOD 1977/78. THE COUNCIL NOTED THAT THE COMMUNITY HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO OPEN NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE IT HAD NOT ESTABLISHED ITS OWN INTERNAL PRICES. IT WAS AGREED THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD OPEN IN BRUSSELS ON APRIL 28, 1977.

THE THIRD POINT CONCERNS THE DESIRE OF ZAMBIA AND LIBERIA TO ACCEDE TO THE SUGAR PROTOCOL. THEIR CASES WILL BE EXAMINED.

4. FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION. A REPORT TO THE COUNCIL ON THE MANAGEMENT OF FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN 1976 WAS PRESENTED BY THE COMMISSION AND THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK. AFTER REAFFIRMING THE ESSENTIAL PART PLAYED BY FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE CONVENTION, THE COUNCIL ADOPTED A RESOLUTION GIVING GUIDELINES FOR ITS CONTINUING MANAGEMENT. THE RESOLUTION ALSO COMPRISES A RECOMMENDATION FOR THE SEATING UP OF AN ACP-EEC SUBCOMMITTEE WITH THE SPECIFIC TASK OF EXAMINING THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE LEAST DEVELOPED, LANDLOCKED AND ISLAND COUNTRIES. IN OTHER SECTORS OF FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION THE COUNCIL ENTRUSTED THE TASK OF ADOPTING NECESSARY DECISIONS TO THE COMMITTEE OF AMBASSADORS. THIS REFERS IN PARTICULAR TO THE FISCAL AND CUSTOMS ARRANGEMENTS APPLICABLE TO EDF CONTRACTS AND THE ARBITRATION RULES GOVERNING ANY DISPUTES.

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5. ADDITIONS TO LIST OF LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. A PROVISION FOR IN ARTICLE 48 OF THE CONVENTION, SEVERAL COUNTRIES WERE ADDED TO THE LIST OF LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. THESE WERE THE COMORO STATE, REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES, AND PROVISIONS FOR SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE AND CAPE VERDE WHEN THEY FULLY ACCEDE TO THE CONVENTION. APPLICATIONS FROM SURINAM AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA TO BE INCLUDED ON THE LIST WERE ACCEPTED FOR FURTHER STUDY.

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6. TRADE COOPERATION. DETAILED DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD ON VARIOUS PROBLEMS CONCERNING TRADE IN GENERAL AND CERTAIN PRODUCTS IN PARTICULAR. EARLY DISCUSSIONS CENTERED ON ARTICLES 2, 7, 8 AND 11 OF THE CONVENTION. THE EEC REMINDED THE KACP THAT BOTH SIDES WERE UNDER OBLIGATION TO GIVE NOTICE WHEN THEY INTENDED TO ADOPT TRADE POLICY MEASURES WHICH COULD HARM THE COMMUNITY'S INTERESTS. THE ACP STATES REQUESTED THAT CONSULTATIONS SHOULD BEGIN WITH A PROPOSAL TO GRANT MORE FAVORABLE TREATMENT FOR TOMATOES AND MELONS FROM ACP COUNTRIES. TALKS WILL CONTINUE ON PROBLEMS CONCERNING MARKETING OF RUM IN THE EEC, AND IT WAS AGREED THAT THERE WOULD BE EARLY EXAMINATION OF THE ACP MEMORANDUM ON APPLICATION OF PROTOCOL NO. 6 ON BANANAS. THE EEC AGREED TO STUDY SUGGESTIONS ON REVISION OF EEC STANDARDS ON AFLATOXIN. A JOINT WORKING PARTY WAS ASSIGNED TO INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE EEC'S GSP SYSTEM. CONCERNING TRADE PROMOTION, IT WAS AGREED THAT AID WOULD BE EXTENDED TO TRADE EVENTS, IMPROVING STRUCTURES IN EXTERNAL TRADE, TRAINING OF PERSONNEL AND MARKETING OF PRODUCTS. A DISCUSSION WAS HELD ON THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS

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OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN AGENCY FOR TRADE COOPERATION, AND AGREEMENT WAS REACHED THAT THE FUNCTIONING OF SUCH AN INSTITUTION WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENDANGER ACP INTERESTS. FINALLY, THE COMMITTEE OF AMBASSADORS WAS INSTRUCTED TO EXAMINE ACP SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SUPPLY OF SURPLUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS TO THE EEC ON FAVORABLE TERMS.

7. CUSTOMS COOPERATION. THE COUNCIL RECEIVED THE REPORT OF THE JOINT CUSTOMS COOPERATION COMMITTEE UNDERLINING THE GENERALLY SATISFACTORY STATE OF THE APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF PROTOCOL NO. 1 ON DEFINITION OF ORIGIN AND ADMINISTRATIVE COOPERATION. DEROGATIONS FROM RULES OF ORIGIN WERE DECIDED IN FAVOR OF MALAWI AND KENYA FOR ARTIFICIAL FISHING FLIES, BUT A REQUEST FROM MAURITIUS WAS HELD FOR FURTHER STUDY.

8. INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION. THE COUNCIL NOTED WITH SATISFACTION THE PROGRESS MADE IN SETTING UP THE CENTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, WHICH BEGAN ITS WORK IN EARLY 1977. THE COUNCIL ADOPTED TWO REQUESTS TO INCREASE ACP REPRESENTATION

BY TWO SEATS APIECE ON THE COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION AND THE ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE CENTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

9. RELATIONS WITH THE ACP/EEC CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY. THE COUNCIL TOOK NOTE WITH INTEREST OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF JUNE 1976 AND OF THE FINAL DECLARATION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF DECEMBER 1976. THE PRESIDENT OF THE ACP COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES WILL ATTEND THE NEXT MEETING OF THE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY IN LUXEMBOURG IN JUNE 1977.

10. OTHER MATTERS. THE COUNCIL TOOK NOTE OF A DETAILED PRESENTATION BY THE LESOTHO DELEGATION CONCERNING SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES IN THAT COUNTRY, NOTED THAT LESOTHO HAD ALREADY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECEIVED EMERGENCY AID AND FOOD AID FROM THE EEC, AND COULD BENEFIT FROM NEW MEASURES JUST AGREED REGARDING STABEX. A STATEMENT BY ACP STATES WAS ALSO PRESENTED, AND IT WAS LEFT TO COUNTRIES CONCERNED TO WORK OUT THE DIFFICULTIES. PROBLEMS CONCERNING STAFFING OF THE ACP SECRETARIAT WERE ALSO AIDED, AND THE EEC AGREED TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE. THE COMMITTEE OF AMBASSADORS WAS CHARGED WITH UNDERTAKING A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION.

11. NEXT MEETING. THE EEC PROPOSED THAT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS BE HELD IN BRUSSELS MARCH 13-14, 1978.

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12. COMMENT: EEC TOOK SERIOUSLY ACP FINGER-WAGGING REPROACHES THAT COMMUNITY IS NEGLECTING LOME CONVENTION, (8(599 043- OCCUPIED WITH OWN ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. THERE WAS LITTLE REAL ANGER, HOWEVER, AMONG ACP DELEGATES TO WHOM WE TALKED. MOST AGREED MILDLY CONFRONTATIONAL TONE SET BY FIJIAN PRIME MINISTER RATU MARA (REF B) WAS VALID EXPRESSION OF ACP ATTITUDES, BUT IT OBVIOUSLY NEGOTIATING PLAY FOR OBTAINING FURTHER CONCESSIONS FROM COMMUNITY PARTNERS.

13. A FREQUENT CRITICISM HEARD AMONG ACP DELEGATES, PIN-POINTED TO US BY GAMBIA DELEGATE EBOU TAAL, WAS THAT LOME CONVENTION NEGOTIATED FOR SPECIFIC BENEFIT AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN YET FORMER COLONIES IN ADIA WERE RECEIVING EQUAL OR BETTER TREATMENT OUTSIDE CONVENTION, ALTHOUGH THEY USUALLY BETTER OFF ECONOMICALLY. GERMAN DELS PLAYED RESPONSIBLE ROLE BUT SEEMED LEAST PATIENT, AT LEAST PRIVATELY, WITH ACP REQUESTS FOR MORE CONCESSIONS, MUTTERING THAT ENTIRE

LOME EXERCISE IS BASED ON EX-COLONIAL RELATIONSHIPS WHICH
ARE IRRELEVANT TO FRG.

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14. THE TALKED-OF "SUVA ACTION PROGRAM" (REF A), WHICH WAS
TO HAVE PROMOTED SOLIDARITY ON ALL FRONTS AMONG ACP MEMBERS,
HAD NOT EMERGED WHEN CONFERENCE ENDED. DISPARITIES IN
CULTURE, GEOGRAPHY, AND ECONOMIES WITHIN ACP MAY HAVE BEEN
TOO GREAT TO RECONCILE THOUGH PROPOSAL PLAN MAY SURFACE IN
FUTURE. IT WAS DISCOUNTED BY A NUMBER OF DELEGATES AS A
VERY LONG RANGE PROPOSITION.

15. APRIL 28 MEETING ON GUARANTEED SUGAR PRICES MAY BE
LIVELY ONE SINCE EEC PROJECTS A 3 MILLION TON SURPLUS OF
COMMUNITY BEET SUGAR FOR 1977-78, AND ACP SUGAR PRODUCERS,
FIJI AMONG THEM, WILL BE AIMING HIGH.

16. AS CONFERENCE CLOSED, MOST ACP DELEGATES EXPRESSED
SATISFACTION WITH RESULTS, PRAISED THE FORTHCOMING
ATTITUDE OF EEC AND ITS READINESS TO NEGOTIATE AND TO HEAR
OUT ALL SIDES. FIJIAN OFFICIALS HERE ARE UNABLE TO FIND A
SINGLE POINT UPON WHICH TO CRITICIZE COMMUNITY IN CONFERENCE
CONTEXT.
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